

Mark 6:45-52 (Ninth Sunday after Pentecost/Proper 12—Series B)**“Entrust Your Days”****Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer, Enfield CT****June 20, 2021**

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our text is from the Gospel lesson for the day recorded in Mark 6:

⁴⁵And immediately [Jesus] made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He dismissed the crowd. ⁴⁶And after He had taken leave of them, He went away into the mountain to pray. ⁴⁷And when it had become evening, the boat was in the middle of the sea, and He was alone on the land. ⁴⁸And behold, they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them. About the fourth watch of the night, He came to them, walking on the sea, and wanted to pass by them. ⁴⁹Now when they saw Him walking on the sea, they thought that He was a ghost, and they cried out, ⁵⁰for they all saw Him and were terrified. But immediately He spoke with them and said to them, “Be courageous. It is I. Don’t be afraid.” ⁵¹And He climbed into the boat with them and the wind ceased and they were utterly amazed, ⁵²for they did not understand about the loaves, but were hardened in their hearts.

They didn’t get it—the crowd, I mean. They wanted to take Jesus by force and make Him their king. And not just any old king, they wanted Him to be their “bread-king” so that they wouldn’t have to work for food any longer. Jesus told the crowd the next day, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves” (John 6:26 ESV). They didn’t understand that in the miracle of the loaves and fish, Jesus was showing them His identity as true God. They didn’t understand that Jesus is Yahweh come to bring the new exodus to His people. Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world” (John 6:31–33 ESV). That’s Jesus, true God and true Man, the Christ.

They didn’t get it—the disciples, I mean. The disciples failed to understand who Jesus is with the stilling of the storm on the Sea of Galilee and with the feeding of the 5000. They didn’t understand that Jesus is Yahweh come to bring the new exodus to His people. If they

didn't get this point about Jesus then, it would not be apparent to them now who Jesus is, even when He walks upon the water.

Rather than entrusting themselves to Him who is true God and true Man, the disciples cried out in fear, "It's a ghost!" They are not so much different from us. When our first thoughts ought to be directed to our God and Lord, they are instead so often turned toward fear and helplessness. The disciples: "That can't be Jesus. We're in the boat. He's back on land!" You and me: "Jesus can't be here for me now in this situation. I'm in the storm. He's in the safety of heaven."

How impossible it seems that Jesus could be with us in all the changes and chances of this earthly life. Five-year old Timmy was in the kitchen as his mother made supper. She asked him to go into the pantry and get her a can of tomato soup, but he didn't want to go in alone. "It's dark in there and I'm scared." She asked again, and he persisted. Finally, she said, "It's OK—Jesus will be in there with you." Timmy walked hesitantly to the door and slowly opened it. He peeked inside, saw it was dark, and started to leave when all at once an idea came, and he said: "Jesus, if you're in there, would you hand me that can of tomato soup?"

How often is that our response? "Jesus, **if** you are there . . ." By that time, we've already run through many scenarios, trying our best to work out our fears and troubles and problems. As a last resort, rather than the first, we turn to the Lord, "If You are there." In Matthew's Gospel account of Jesus' walking on the water, it is Peter who voices this. Perceiving their fear, Jesus called to the disciples in the boat, "Be courageous! It is I. Don't be afraid." Matthew tells us that Peter called out, "Lord, **if it is you**, command me to come

to you on the water” (Matt. 14:28 ESV). Of course, Jesus told Peter to come, and he did. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, “Lord, save me” (Matt. 14:30 ESV). Amid the wind and waves, Peter doubted (even when Jesus was right there). Peter couldn’t muster the trust that Jesus, true God and true Man, was really, truly present for him and for his salvation in the fullest sense. We have the same doubts and fears, even though Jesus is right here.

We cannot see the Lord Jesus. We can’t touch His hand and pull Him into our boat of life. But Jesus is nevertheless present with us. He is, after all, Emmanuel. He is God who is with us always, even to the end of the age! He is the God-Man who has proven His faithfulness to you and me with His perfect life, death, and resurrection. If you were not of the greatest value to the Lord Jesus, He would not have given Himself up into the pains of death and hell to rescue you from Satan, sin, and everlasting death in order that you might live with Him forever in the joys of eternity!

Jesus is the new and greater Moses who has brought about the new exodus for you. Jesus death and rising again has rescued you from the land of sin’s slavery. He saved you from bondage to your sinful nature and from your captivity to Satan and the power of death. He has brought you through the Sea of the water of Baptism into the promised land of forgiveness and eternal life where He feeds you with a manna better than the Israelites ate. He feeds you with His true Body and Blood with the bread and wine. These gifts bestow upon you forgiveness, life, salvation, and the strengthening of your faith so that you can entrust yourselves to the Lord Christ and depend on Him in true faith to be there for you, with you, for your blessing and benefit.

As Jesus assured the disciples with His Word and His Presence, so He does for you. He assures you that you are His baptized son or daughter. You are children of the heavenly Father. Baptism delivered Christ to you, clothed you with Christ, and has brought Christ to dwell in you as His temple, a temple of the Holy Spirit. As Christ has come to you through water and the Word by the power of the Spirit, He delivers to you forgiveness. He rescues you from death and devil. He gives you eternal life.

By means of Word and Sacrament, the Savior's promise holds true—"I am with you always." He is present by the power of the Holy Spirit in the Gospel Word, in Baptism, and in His Holy Supper. Christ Himself comes to you through these Means in the midst of your fears and worries, your concerns and illnesses. He is present in the Word and Sacraments for you, with you, and for your forgiveness and strengthened faith, for your blessing and for the hope of glory that shall never fade away. Your life is forever preserved by the presence of Jesus. Whatever may come, you can confidently entrust yourself, your days, and your burdens to the Lord Jesus. He will never leave you. He will not forsake you, ever!

Take heart, have hope, my spirit,
 And do not be dismayed;
 God helps in ev'ry trial
 And makes you unafraid.
 Await His time with patience
 Through darkest hours of night
 Until the sun you hoped for
 Delights your eager sight. (*LSB* 754:3) Amen.